February 25, 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD:

FROM: Howard P. willens

Re: Commission files

A meeting was held today in my office regarding the structure of the files to be maintained by the Commission. Present at the meeting were: Mr. Sterman and Miss Farrar of Archives, Dr. Goldberg, Mr. Shaffer and myself.

Mr. Sterman presented for our consideration a revised proposed indexing system to be used in developing the Commission's files. The system, as he outlined it, is based primarily on maintaining files regarding key persons under numerous subheadings, files on other persons and agencies, and other categories designed to encompass most of the subject matter of the Commission's work. This outline reflected considerable more detail in the subheadings than had been included in the prior outline which had been submitted for my consideration approximately three weeks ago. At that time I had considered the proposal of the Archives personnel to be unsatisfactory and had held further action in abeyance until the tentative outlines of the staff members had been submitted on February 18 in the hope that revised outlines submitted by the staff, with appropriate annotations to the investigative materials, would provide an alternative means of establishing the Commission's files.

There was some discussion between Mr. Sterman and Dr. Goldberg as to the desirability of setting up a separate chronological file of all incoming and outgoing correspondence with the exception of citizen mail. Dr. Goldberg made the point that such a filing system would provide historians with an easy way to gain an overall perspective of the work of the Commission. Mr. Sterman and Miss Farrar were instructed to include such a file in their system.

Mr. Sterman outlined in detail to Dr. Goldberg the extent of duplication of investigative materials which is contemplated by the system proposed. For example, it is intended to have a file of every person whose name is mentioned in an investigative report, in which file will be contained the page or pages of the investigative materials on which the person's name appears. During and after the meeting Dr. Goldberg expressed satisfaction with the detailed effort whichwas going to be made with regard to the Commission files, and in fact expressed surprise at the scope of the work contemplated.

The meeting ended with an agreement that the system proposed by Archives would be put into effect immediately. Copies of the proposed description of the system were to be made available to Dr. Goldberg and myself so that we might submit additional ideas to Miss Farrar in the near future.